

## Message Text

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ACTION OES-09

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 ISO-00 NASA-02 NSF-02 COME-00 INT-05

DOTE-00 DOE-15 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 PM-05 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 SOE-02 SS-15 /098 W

-----103750 251210Z /53

R 250408Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0674

INFO COMMANDANT US COAST GUARD WASHDC

ASST SECY OF NAVY FOR R&D WASHDC

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DEPT PASS TO NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION,  
NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION, NATIONAL OCEANOGRAPHIC AND  
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION, U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY,  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TSPA, EWWT, JA

SUBJECT: USE OF SATELLITE IMAGERY BY NEW JAPANESE  
ICEBREAKER

1. ON REFERENCE FROM EMBASSY'S MUTUAL DEFENSE ASSISTANCE  
OFFICE, THREE OFFICERS OF JAPANESE MARITIME SELF DEFENSE  
FORCE CALLED UPON EMBASSY SCIENCE COUNSELOR (JOINED BY ASST  
EMBASSY NAVAL ATTACHE) TO REPORT ON PLANS BY GOJ TO BUILD  
NEW ICEBREAKER FOR ANTARCTIC SERVICE AS REPLACEMENT FOR  
ICEBREAKER "FUJI" NOW IN OPERATION, AND TO EQUIP NEW  
VESSEL WITH CAPABILITY TO RECEIVE SATELLITE IMAGERY OR  
DATA FOR WEATHER FORECASTING, DETECTION OF MARINE HAZARDS  
SUCH AS ICE FLOES, AND NAVIGATION AID. NAVAL OFFICERS  
WERE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN LEARNING IF SEASAT  
SATELLITE LAUNCHED RECENTLY COULD PROVIDE IMAGERY OF KIND  
SOUGHT, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THAT NEW ICE BREAKER WILL NOT  
BE PUT INTO OPERATION UNTIL 1982.

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2. ICEBREAKER WILL BE CONSTRUCTED WITH FUNDS ALLOCATED  
BY GOJ MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SINCE VESSEL IS TO BE  
EMPLOYED ONLY IN CIVILIAN ANTARCTIC SERVICE FOR SUPPORT  
OF JAPAN'S ANTARCTIC RESEARCH STATION. AS IN CASE OF  
FUJI, CREW WILL BE FURNISHED BY MARITIME SELF DEFENSE  
FORCE (MSDF). MSDF ALSO WILL SUPERVISE CONSTRUCTION OF

SHIP ON BEHALF OF MOE. DESIGN IS TO GET UNDER WAY LATER THIS YEAR, WITH CONSTRUCTION TO START IN APRIL 1979. COMPLETION IS SCHEDULED FOR JULY 1981 AND COMMISSIONING IN MARCH 1982. SHIP WILL HAVE BEAM OF 90 FT., LENGTH OF 450 FT., AND DISPLACEMENT OF 10,000 TONS, ALL LARGER THAN FUJI.

3. OFFICERS REPORTED THAT THEY HAD STUDIED VARIOUS SATELLITE IMAGING SYSTEMS SUCH AS TIROS, LANDSAT C, AND SEASAT, IN CONSULTATION WITH JAPAN METEOROLOGICAL AGENCY AND NATIONAL SPACE DEVELOPMENT AGENCY. THEY HAD CONCLUDED THAT LANDSAT C OR SEASAT WOULD PROVIDE BEST RESOLUTION, BUT THAT SEASAT OFFERED GREATER POTENTIAL FOR TOTAL MISSION INTERESTS: NAVIGATIONAL AID, HAZARD DETECTION, WEATHER FORECASTING, AND OCEANOGRAPHIC RESEARCH. IN TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS WHICH FOLLOWED, IT BECAME CLEAR TO US SIDE THAT JAPANESE HAD NOT FULLY IDENTIFIED SUCH PROBLEMS AS SIZE OF ON-BOARD RECEIVING ANTENNAS REQUIRED, SIZE AND COMPLEXITY OF DATA REDUCTION COMPUTERS, DEGREE OF SHIP STABILIZATION NEEDED, ETC., ALTHOUGH THEY RECOGNIZED THAT GROUND STATION COULD BE USE FOR NON-REAL-TIME IMAGERY. SCICOUNS GAVE OFFICERS COPY OF NASA PRESS KIT 78-77 AND PRESS RELEASE 78-116 ON SEASAT AND NOTED THAT SEASAT WOULD BE IN EXPERIMENTAL PHASE FOR SOME TIME, THAT MASSIVE DATA REDUCTION FACILITIES WERE REQUIRED FOR SOME SEASAT CAPABILITIES, AND THAT AS FAR AS UNCLASSIFIED

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EMBASSY KNEW, NO SPECIFIC ARRANGEMENTS HAD BEEN ANNOUNCED FOR "COMMERCIAL" INTERNATIONAL SERVICES FROM SATELLITE. HE ALSO OBSERVED THAT IMAGERY TAKEN SO FAR APPEARED TO BE ONLY FROM NORTHERN HEMISPHERE. JAPANESE SAID THAT THEIR OBJECTIVE WAS TO EQUIP VESSEL WITH DOMESTIC ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT AND TO ACQUIRE U.S. SOFTWARE. EMBOFF REPLIED THAT THIS MIGHT NOT BE POSSIBLE WITH ADVANCED SATELLITE SYSTEMS. HE AGREED TO REPORT MSDF INTEREST TO WASHINGTON AND TO TRY TO OBTAIN ADVICE ON BEST OPERATIONAL SYSTEM AVAILABLE FOR 1981 - 1982 TIME FRAME THAT WOULD MEET ICEBREAKER'S NEEDS.

4. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT USG GIVE SERIOUS THOUGHT TO ASSISTING MSDF, CONSIDERING THAT SHIP WILL BE USED ONLY IN CIVILIAN SERVICE, THAT U.S. AND JAPAN MAINTAIN CLOSE COOPERATION IN ANTARCTIC RESEARCH, AND THAT OPPORTUNITY MAY EXIST FOR SALE OF EQUIPMENT AND/OR SOFTWARE TO GOJ. DEPARTMENT OF NAVY IS REQUESTED TO EXAMINE WHAT SHIPBOARD SYSTEMS IT MIGHT HAVE AVAILABLE WHICH COULD BE FURNISHED TO MSDF THROUGH MILITARY CHANNELS. WE WOULD APPRECIATE EARLY RESPONSE AS TO GENERAL USG POSITION, FOLLOWED IF POSSIBLE BY MORE DETAILED COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, OR

PROPOSALS. MANSFIELD

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** SATELLITES, ICEBREAKERS  
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**Review Markings:**  
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